Message

From: Faeth, Lisa [Faeth.Lisa@epa.gov]
Sent: 11/23/2018 4:12:56 PM
To: Anderson, Steve [Anderson.Steve@epa.gov]; Askinazi, Valerie [Askinazi.Valerie@epa.gov]; Baptist, Erik [Baptist.Erik@epa.gov]; Barkas, Jessica [barkas.jessica@epa.gov]; Beck, Nancy [Beck.Nancy@epa.gov]; Blair, Susanna [Blair.Susanna@epa.gov]; Blunck, Christopher [Blunck.Chris@epa.gov]; Buster, Pamela [Buster.Pamela@epa.gov]; Canavan, Sheila [Canavan.Sheila@epa.gov]; Caraballo, Mario [Caraballo.Mario@epa.gov]; Carroll, Megan [Carroll.Megan@epa.gov]; Cherepy, Andrea [Cherepy.Andrea@epa.gov]; Christian, Myrta [Christian.Myrta@epa.gov]; Corado, Ana [Corado.Ana@epa.gov]; Davies, Clive [Davies.Clive@epa.gov]; Dekleva, Lynn [dekleva.lynn@epa.gov]; Devito, Steve [Devito.Steve@epa.gov]; Doa, Maria [Doa.Maria@epa.gov]; Drewes, Scott [Drewes.Scott@epa.gov]; Dunton, Cheryl [Dunton.Cheryl@epa.gov]; Edelstein, Rebecca [Edelstein.Rebecca@epa.gov]; Edmonds, Marc [Edmonds.Marc@epa.gov]; Elwood, Holly [Elwood.Holly@epa.gov]; Faeth, Lisa [Faeth.Lisa@epa.gov]; Farquharson, Chenise [Farquharson.Chenise@epa.gov]; Fehrenbacher, Cathy [Fehrenbacher.Cathy@epa.gov]; Feustel, Ingrid [feustel.ingrid@epa.gov]; Frank, Donald [Frank.Donald@epa.gov]; Gibson, Hugh [Gibson.Hugh@epa.gov]; Gimlin, Peter [Gimlin.Peter@epa.gov]; Gorder, Chris [Gorder.Chris@epa.gov]; Gordon, Brittney [Gordon.Brittney@epa.gov]; Grant, Brian [Grant.Brian@epa.gov]; Gray, Shawna [Gray.Shawna@epa.gov]; Groeneveld, Thomas [Groeneveld.Thomas@epa.gov]; Guthrie, Christina [Guthrie.Christina@epa.gov]; Helfgott, Daniel [Helfgott.Daniel@epa.gov]; Henry, Tala [Henry.Tala@epa.gov]; Kapust, Edna [Kapust.Edna@epa.gov]; Kemme, Sara [kemme.sara@epa.gov]; Koch, Erin [Koch.Erin@epa.gov]; Krasnic, Toni [krasnic.toni@epa.gov]; Lavoie, Emma [Lavoie.Emma@epa.gov]; Lee, Mari [Lee.Mari@epa.gov]; Lee, Virginia [Lee.Virginia@epa.gov]; Leopard, Matthew (OEI) [Leopard.Matthew@epa.gov]; Liva, Aakruti [Liva.Aakruti@epa.gov]; Lobar, Bryan [Lobar.Bryan@epa.gov]; Mclean, Kevin [Mclean.Kevin@epa.gov]; Menasche, Claudia [Menasche.Claudia@epa.gov]; Morris, Jeff [Morris.Jeff@epa.gov]; Moss, Kenneth [Moss.Kenneth@epa.gov]; Mottley, Tanya [Mottley.Tanya@epa.gov]; Moyer, Adam [moyer.adam@epa.gov]; Myers, Irina [Myers.Irina@epa.gov]; Myrick, Pamela [Myrick.Pamela@epa.gov]; Nazef, Laura [Nazef.Laura@epa.gov]; Ortiz, Julia [Ortiz.Julia@epa.gov]; Owen, Elise [Owen.Elise@epa.gov]; Parsons, Doug [Parsons.Douglas@epa.gov]; Passe, Loraine [Passe.Loraine@epa.gov]; Pierce, Alison [Pierce.Alison@epa.gov]; Pratt, Johnk [Pratt.Johnk@epa.gov]; Price, Michelle [Price.Michelle@epa.gov]; Reese, Recie [Reese.Recie@epa.gov]; Reisman, Larry [Reisman.Larry@epa.gov]; Rice, Cody [Rice.Cody@epa.gov]; Richardson, Vickie [Richardson.Vickie@epa.gov]; Ross, Philip [Ross.Philip@epa.gov]; Sadowsky, Don [Sadowsky.Don@epa.gov]; Santacroce, Jeffrey [Santacroce.Jeffrey@epa.gov]; Saxton, Dion [Saxton.Dion@epa.gov]; Scarano, Louis [Scarano.Louis@epa.gov]; Scheifele, Hans [Scheifele.Hans@epa.gov]; Schmit, Ryan [schmit.ryan@epa.gov]; Schweer, Greg [Schweer.Greg@epa.gov]; Selby-Mohamadu, Yvette [Selby-Mohamadu.Yvette@epa.gov]; Seltzer, Mark [Seltzer.Mark@epa.gov]; Sheehan, Eileen [Sheehan.Eileen@epa.gov]; Sherlock, Scott [Sherlock.Scott@epa.gov]; Simons, Andrew [Simons.Andrew@epa.gov]; Sirmons, Chandler [Sirmons.Chandler@epa.gov]; Slotnick, Sue [Slotnick.Sue@epa.gov]; Smith, David G. [Smith.DavidG@epa.gov]; Smith-Seam, Rhoda [smith-seam.rhoda@epa.gov]; Stedeford, Todd [Stedeford.Todd@epa.gov]; Strauss, Linda [Strauss.Linda@epa.gov]; Symmes, Brian [Symmes.Brian@epa.gov]; Tanner, Barbara [Tanner.Barbara@epa.gov]; Thompson, Tony [Thompson.Tony@epa.gov]; Tierney, Meghan [Tierney.Meghan@epa.gov]; Tillman, Thomas [Tillman.Thomas@epa.gov]; Tomassoni, Guy [Tomassoni.Guy@epa.gov]; Tran, Chi [Tran.Chi@epa.gov]; Turk, David [Turk.David@epa.gov]; Vendinello, Lynn [Vendinello.Lynn@epa.gov]; Wallace, Ryan [Wallace.Ryan@epa.gov]; Wheeler, Cindy [Wheeler.Cindy@epa.gov]; Widawsky, David [Widawsky.David@epa.gov]; Williams, Aresia [Williams.Aresia@epa.gov]; Williams, Bridget [Williams.Bridget@epa.gov]; Williamson, Tracy [Williamson.Tracy@epa.gov]; Wills, Jennifer [Wills.Jennifer@epa.gov]; Wise, Louise [Wise.Louise@epa.gov]; Wolf, Joel [Wolf.Joel@epa.gov]; Wright, Tracy [Wright.Tracy@epa.gov]; Yowell, John [yowell.john@epa.gov]
Subject: News Articles (For EPA Distribution Only)

BNA DAILY ENVIRONMENT REPORT ARTICLES

Chemours Sees Millions in Liability After Reaching Chemical Deal

By Nick Lichtenberg

Posted Nov. 23, 2018, 9:31 AM

Chemours expects to record an additional estimated liability of about $20 million to $30 million in the fourth quarter as a result of the recent proposed consent order with North Carolina's Department of Environmental Quality.

EPA Standardizes Test Method for More Perfluorinated Chemicals

By Sylvia Carignan

Posted Nov. 21, 2018, 1:51 PM

Four compounds that have been contaminating drinking water now have a standardized EPA-approved laboratory testing method, reducing the need for commercial labs to invent their own.

European Union to Look at Cutting Exposures to Dioxins

By Stephen Gardner

Posted Nov. 21, 2018, 1:39 PM

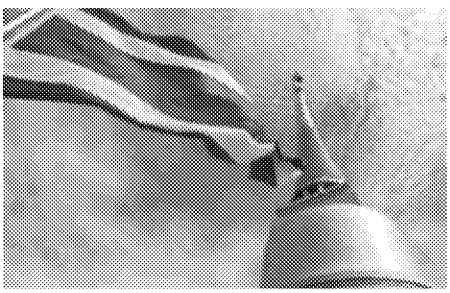
The European Union will consider new ways to protect its citizens from dioxins and similar substances after food-safety regulators recommended a dramatic cut in intake levels considered safe in the bloc.

CHEMICAL WATCH ARTICLES

Revision to Thailand's Hazardous Substance Act expected in 2019

Rules for international supply-chain shipments will be eased

21 November 2018 / Substance registration, Thailand



The third revision to Thailand's Hazardous Substance Act, its main chemical law, may be enacted around the time of the country's next general election, expected in February 2019, according to Dr Piyatida Pukclai from consultancy Dr Knoell.

Dr Pukclai told delegates at Chemical Watch's fifth annual Regulatory Summit Asia in Singapore that public meetings are still taking place and there may still be amendments. The draft was accepted by Thailand's parliament on 28 May and has been awaiting the prime minister's signature.

The law was previously revised in 2008, but there have been a number of updates to hazardous chemical lists in the last decade.

The main change to the law will be in the rules for international shipments of hazardous substances.

The rules seek to differentiate imports and exports from other transboundary shipments, where substances are moved along the international supply chain. This is important because of the intermediary role Thailand plays in manufacturing for international companies. For example, the country is the world's ninth largest producer of motor vehicles, mainly for South Korean and Japanese companies. And it is a major manufacturer of computer hard drives for companies such as Western Digital and Hitachi.

Company registration will not be required where these transboundary shipments are 're-imports' or 're-exports'. Companies would only have to declare movement of hazardous substances (Type 2 and 3 substances). This means these shipments would not face the same level of scrutiny and notification as standard imports/exports, such as the requirement for an import permit.

For the most hazardous substances – Type 4 – transboundary movement will be prohibited.

Other changes include:

- rules allowing the regulation of product advertising and promotion; and
- registration for the production or importation of hazardous substances (Type 2 and 3), valid for ten years.

This article was corrected on 23 November. The original article incorrectly stated that "company registration will be required where these transboundary shipments are 're-imports or 're-exports'"whereas the correct phrase was that company registration will not be required where these transboundary shipments are 're-imports' or 're-exports'."

Sunny Lee

Asia editor

Related Articles

- The hazardous substance act BE2535 (2008 revision)

Further Information:

- Draft revised act

Brazil's RoHS may cover cars

But heavy goods vehicles, such as trucks, expected to be exempt

22 November 2018 / Aerospace, automotive & engineering, Brazil, Electrical & electronics

Cars may be in scope of a draft regulation on the control and use of hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment (EEE) in Brazil, according to government sources.

Aiming to align the Brazilian regulation with the EU's Directive on the restriction of hazardous substances (RoHS) in EEE, the draft would see restrictions on the same chemicals:

- lead;
- cadmium;
- mercury;
- hexavalent chromium;
- polybrominated biphenyls (PBB);
- polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDE); and
- four phthalates – DEHP, BBP, DBP and DIBP.

But unlike EU RoHS, cars may be in scope because the country does not, and has never, had a regulation covering hazardous substances in vehicles.

In Europe, hazardous substances in cars are covered by the EU's end of life vehicles (ELV) Directive, which prohibits the use of lead, mercury, cadmium and hexavalent chromium. The ELV Directive predates EU RoHS and so cars were excluded from the latter.

Brazil is therefore considering including cars in RoHS, "even if only to regulate the substances lead, mercury hexavalent chromium and cadmium". This, the sources say, would ensure "complete harmonisation of EU legislation with that of Brazil".

"We are in contact with the national [trade] associations to define the inclusion, or not, of automotive vehicles in Brazilian RoHS," one source said.

Trucks

One government source said that because certain types of trucks are not in scope of the EU's ELV and RoHS Directives, it would not make sense to include them in Brazil's RoHS, as this would veer away from regulatory harmonisation.

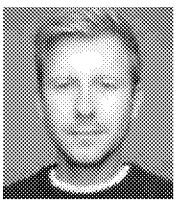
The source also said that one national vehicle association has "informed us that it will be extremely difficult for this part of the [sector] to comply because they have never had to meet RoHS and ELV requirements in Europe or any other country". Trucks are also the main form of transportation for moving goods around the country.

The draft was presented in Brasilia in July to the working group established by the country's National Chemical Safety Commission (Conasq). The meeting carried out a first joint evaluation of the proposal.

The deadline to finalise the draft is mid-December. This will then be sent to the National Commission for the Environment (Conama) for further consideration.

A final version of the regulation is expected to be published in the second half of 2019.

Last month, Conasq approved a draft law for the industrial chemicals sector, which sets out provisions covering the registration, evaluation and control of chemicals.



Leigh Stringer

Global Business Editor

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- Working group evaluates Brazil RoHS draft
- Brazil finalises draft law for industrial chemicals regulation

Further Information:

- Brazil RoHS

Walgreens adopts chemicals policy

Restricted substances to be phased out by 2021

22 November 2018 / Healthcare, Personal care, Retail, United States, Voluntary action

The Walgreens Boots Alliance, a global pharmacy giant with more than 18,500 stores, has adopted its long-awaited chemicals policy.

The company announced in 2014 that its chemical policy would be published the following spring. It finally launched this month.

The company's policy, which took effect on 8 November, establishes a restricted substances list (RSL). This includes chemical groups such as phthalates, certain parabens, nonylphenol and NP ethoxylates, as well as individual substances such as xylene, toluene, triclosan and plastic microbeads.

The RSL applies to baby, personal care and household cleaning products within Walgreens – and Boots UK-owned brands and exclusive consumer retail lines. In 2014, Walgreens purchased the remaining 55% stake in Boots UK, in addition to the 45% it bought in 2012.

The company says on its website that it has started working with its suppliers to reformulate these products with the goal of removing the listed chemicals by the end of 2021.

To move this process forward, it is encouraging suppliers to select ingredients identified under the US EPA's Safer Choice programme, or use the criteria. It also urges suppliers to use ChemSec's safer alternatives marketplace to evaluate and select safer substitutions.

It intends to report annually on its progress and update its RSL as "more scientific information becomes available". Chemicals on its RSL are selected from various authoritative lists.

Coinciding with its RSL, the company has developed a list of chemicals that it will monitor and, over time, look to restrict and/or minimise across its product portfolio. This list, which has not been released, will be used to update the company's RSL.

Personal care products

Specifically for beauty and personal care products, Walgreens will monitor six authoritative lists. These are:

- California's Proposition 65 – reproductive and developmental toxicants and carcinogens;
- EPA's Toxics Release Inventory PBTs;
- EU – Cosmetics Regulation Annex II;
- EU – Priority Endocrine Disruptors (Categories 1, 2);
- EU REACH – Annex XVII CMRs (Appendices 1-6); and
- The International Agency for Research on Cancer (Iarc) – categories 1, 2A and 2B.

These lists make up the Beauty and Personal Care (BPC) stewardship list, which is borne from an initiative set up by UK organisation Forum for the Future, The Sustainability Consortium and a group of companies in the industry, including Walmart and Target, with input from Walgreens.

Walgreens' policy asks all suppliers of its owned and third party brands to monitor the use of these chemicals within their beauty and personal care portfolios.

"Where ingredients are regulated we expect all our suppliers to comply with regulation and in accordance to the regulatory safety framework," the policy reads.

Transparency

The company also plans to:

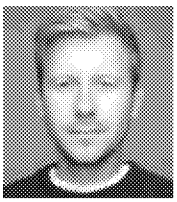
- list the ingredients in all own-brand household cleaners on product labels by the end of 2019;

- encourage suppliers of formulated products to publicly disclose intentionally added ingredients, either on package labelling or digitally; and
- encourage them to obtain credible certifications, such as the US EPA's Safer Choice and Cradle to Cradle certifications.

Last week, the Mind the Store coalition of NGOs said Walgreens is one of the "most improved" retailers featured in its latest chemicals management report card. The company received a B-, which placed it in the top 10 out of 40 US retailers ranked.

In its report card, Mind the Store comments on Walgreens' policy, saying improvements could be made by strengthening accountability measures, including conducting its own testing and requiring suppliers to test in third-party approved laboratories.

It adds that Walgreens should expand the scope of its policy beyond the categories currently covered and require suppliers to conduct alternatives assessments to avoid regrettable substitutions. In addition, it urges the company to become a signatory to the Chemical Footprint Project and pilot it with key private label suppliers.



Leigh Stringer

Global Business Editor

Related Articles

- US retailer to address chemicals of concern
- ChemSec launches online marketplace for safer alternatives
- Apple, Walmart, Target top US retailer chemical rankings
- CFP survey highlights increasing management programmes

Further Information:

- Walgreens policy
- RSL
- Walgreens press release

Norwegian review finds that PFBS persists and is mobile

But the bioaccumulation potential is low compared with PFOS

22 November 2018 / Norway, PFCs, REACH, Risk assessment, Textiles & apparel

Published studies suggest that PFBS, a substance in the same class as PFOS, persists and is mobile in the environment, according to a literature review by Norwegian authorities.

The conclusion bolsters preliminary statements about the substance made by Norway in the context of prioritisation under REACH. Norway is expected to submit a REACH substance of very high concern (SVHC) proposal for the substance by March next year.

The review, conducted by the Norwegian Geotechnical Institute on behalf of the Norwegian Environment Agency, says that degradation of PFBS has not be seen in any study conducted to date. It also describes the environmental persistence as "extreme".

Regarding mobility, the review says that PFBS contamination of the Arctic via water is expected by read-across from similar substances. For example, studies have found PFOS and PFHxS contamination of the Arctic through long-range transport.

This expectation is supported by measurement of PFBS in Arctic biota and Antarctic water, the review says. More generally, it is also supported by evidence that PFBS is "ubiquitous" in water samples. Studies have found it in marine and freshwater environments, as well as ground water and drinking water.

The bioaccumulation potential of PFBS is lower than that of similar substances, such as PFOS. However, studies have found "relatively high" concentrations of PFBS in plants grown on soil contaminated with per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFASs).

M and vM

Governments are increasingly restricting use of traditional PFASs, such as PFOS, because of their persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic (PBT) properties. Meanwhile, use of alternative, short chain PFASs, such as PFBS, is increasing.

The two substances are chemically and functionally very similar, suggesting that PFBS can be used as a substitute. However, there are growing concerns that they may also be similar in their risks to human health and the environment.

Norway outlined various concerns in February in a risk management option analysis conclusion document. The document said that, among other attributes, the substance fulfills both the persistent and very persistent criteria of REACH.

"It may even be categorised as extremely persistent, since no degradation is to be expected under environmentally relevant conditions." Additionally, PFBS is mobile and may irreversibly contaminate drinking water sources and the aqueous environment, the document said.

Overall, "PFBS exhibits properties that give rise to an equivalent level of concern to PBT/vPvB [persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic/very persistent, very bioaccumulative] substances".

Then, in August, Norway notified Echa of its intention to submit an SVHC proposal for "PFBS, its salts and related substances" in August, again citing an "equivalent level of concern" of serious effects on the environment.

Consequently, PFBS could be a test case for SVHC designation on the basis that a substance is mobile (M) or very mobile (vM) rather than B or vB.

Germany's Federal Environment Agency, UBA, proposed the idea in 2017 as a way to improve protection of human health and the environment from certain chemicals that do not meet the B criterion but are nevertheless of concern. The chemicals are of concern because they are persistent, mobile in water and reach drinking water sources because they do not bind to solid substances, such as sand or activated carbon, and cannot be removed by filters. The agency doubled down on its position in April when it ran a two-day workshop to explore the topic.

US situation

On 14 November, the US EPA published its draft reference doses for PFBS and Gen X chemicals as part of a broad effort to address the potential risks of PFASs.

Andrew Turley

Science editor, Chemical Watch

Related Articles

- German environment agency calls for criteria for 'mobile chemicals'
- 'Mobile' substances in water could be SVHCs, Germany says
- EPA releases draft toxicological profiles for two PFASs

Further Information:

- Norwegian literature review
- RMOA conclusion document
- Notification of intention to submit SVHC proposal

Greater EU SVHC substitution incentives needed – industry

Trade bodies propose REACH authorisation improvement measures

22 November 2018 / Alternatives assessment & substitution, Europe, REACH, SVHCs

EU authorities should "motivate" companies to actively look for alternatives to SVHCs by providing "positive incentives", such as tax cuts for producers, industry associations have said.

Their proposal, part of a review calling for improvements to the REACH authorisation process, was sent to the European Commission and Echa last week. It was also forwarded to the members of the Competent Authorities for REACH and CLP (Caracal) ahead of this week's meeting.

The associations suggest EU bodies establish a mechanism that provides "assurance of a minimum period of protection" for companies that invest in alternative processes and to allow them secure returns on investments.

The document was prepared by:

- SMEunited – the trade body for European SMEs;
- the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association (Acea);
- the European Aerospace and Defence Industries Association (ASD); and
- the European Association of Automotive Suppliers (Clepa).

The protection mechanism should be in place unless there is evidence of "overwhelming" risk from alternative substances, the group added. And to avoid 'regrettable substitution', chosen alternatives with the potential to be added to the authorisation list at a later stage "should be flagged as clearly as possible".

The associations also called for a more level playing field with non-EU companies. Their products are imported into the EU and may contain SVHCs, but they are spared the "burden" of the authorisation process, the group said.

Authorities, they said, could tackle this by:

- implementing a European programme to support investments in new technologies, or upgrades, such as the Horizon 2020, which already considers substitution projects;
- member states establishing positive incentives, like subsidies for innovation projects; and
- supporting activities and enhancing funds for research on alternatives.

In its second Review of REACH, the Commission proposed greater promotion of substitution. NGOs have said that the authorisation process "rewards the laggards and frustrates the frontrunners".

Short timeframe

In their document, the group said the time between an authorisation decision on an SVHC and its sunset date is insufficient. In a "best-case" scenario, a company has less than six months to prepare itself, suppliers and downstream users and this creates "major" disruption to business.

A "reasonable" timescale around new conditions of use for an SVHC should be introduced, they said.

Additionally, they asked for a review of rules for applications covering multiple operators. Applicants in this situation, the group added, have encountered "difficulties" with Echa's Risk Assessment (Rac) and Socio-economic Analysis (Seac) Committees which interpret their documents as "overly broad or not having sufficient detail".

Companies are obliged to "estimate" the risks when data is lacking, but the committees evaluate these as "uncertainties", they said, and penalise them with reduced review periods.

The concerns could be mitigated by a review period based only on the availability of alternatives and the complexity of the sector, they added. And regulators should provide "clear and practical" expectations and review the procedure to monetise risk to human health or the environment.

Earlier this year, Germany called for a political discussion on the consequences of Seac's "too simplistic" methodology to calculate the impact of chemicals.

SME concerns

SMEs have "huge difficulty" in preparing authorisation applications on their own, the document said. This means "high dependency" on upstream applications. To combat this, the group called for better guidance on these so they can cover a broader group of companies, including SMEs. It also recommended a simplified procedure for low volumes, and exploring the possibility for regional authorisation applications.

SMEunited, formerly Ueapme, recently published a position paper on improving REACH for small and medium enterprises.

Note

Clelia Oziel

EMEA correspondent

Related Articles

- EU publishes delayed second REACH Review
- NGOs say REACH authorisation 'rewards laggards'
- Germany calls for revamp of socio-economic analyses of authorisations
- Ueapme pushes for more 'workable' REACH for SMEs

Further Information:

- Paper

Washington state plans alternatives assessment for FCM PFASs

22 November 2018 / Food & drink, Food contact, United States

Washington state has put forward its plan for an alternatives assessment for per- and polyfluorinated substances (PFASs) in paper food packaging, bringing a ban on the chemicals in food contact materials a step closer.

Earlier this year, the northwestern US state passed a law to prohibit all PFASs in paper food packaging. This will only take effect, however, following the identification of safer alternatives, as specified in the state's toxics in packaging law (RCW 70.95G).

The Department of Ecology is required to conduct an alternatives assessment to identify safer options (chemical and non-chemical).

The proposal says it will consider chemical hazard, performance, cost and availability and exposure. There will be a focus on packaging intended for direct food contact, including applications used in the food service industry.

The department is accepting comments on the proposal until 4 December via a public comment form on its website.

The state banned the use of firefighting foams with PFASs in April.

Related Articles

- Washington takes aim at PFASs in food packaging, firefighting foams
- Washington state bans firefighting foams with PFASs

Further Information:

- AA project summary
- ESHB 2658 summary
- AA public comment form

UN environment head resigns over $500,000 travel expenses

Excessive flights deemed 'reputation risk' for group focused on sustainability

22 November 2018 / Global, Multinational bodies

The head of the UN's Environment Programme has resigned following findings by an internal investigation that he spent almost $500,000 on travel and hotels during a 22-month period.

A draft audit of official travel carried out by staff at Unep, obtained by *The Guardian* newspaper and seen by Chemical Watch, found that the organisation's former executive director Erik Solheim ran up costs of $488,518 while travelling for 529 out of 668 days – amounting to almost 80% of his time.

The report, by the UN's Office of Internal Oversight Services, also found widespread rule breaking and a lack of accountability, during the period of its investigation, January 2016 to March 2018. Between 2014 and 2017 travel costs in the organisation almost doubled from $14.6m to $27.2m.

And the report warns that such extensive travel, particularly by air, "presents a reputation risk to the organisation, especially that Unep is supposed to be the lead on sustainable environmental matters".

The final audit report has yet to be made public, but on receiving an advance copy of it, Mr Solheim said in a 20 November statement he had decided to step down "with a heavy heart".

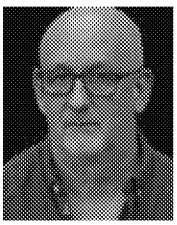
The executive director, a Norwegian diplomat and former politician, took up his position in 2016, succeeding Achim Steiner. During his period in office he has recognised the importance of regulating chemicals.

At a meeting of the intersessional process on the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (Saicm) in February last year, Mr Solheim said that to speed up the elimination of unwanted chemicals globally, governments must challenge businesses through regulation.

Speaking to Chemical Watch at the event in Brazil, he said regulating markets would "mobilise the enormous forces of business" and encourage the development of better, safer chemicals and products.

Last November, Mr Solheim laid out measures to address hazardous substances in his report *Towards a pollution-free planet*, which highlighted chemicals of concern as a "hard-hitting" target.

UN Secretary General António Guterres confirmed he had accepted Mr Solheim's resignation, which will be effective from 22 November. He also announced that Joyce Msuya, the organisation's deputy executive director, would take over in an acting role while a successor is sought.



Nick Hazlewood

News editor

Related Articles

- Unep head calls for bolder government actions on hazardous substances
- Head of UN Environment calls for 'targeted intervention' on hazardous chemicals

Further Information:

- Solheim statement
- UN secretary-general statement

Intentional microplastics are primarily a soil and freshwater problem, Echa finds

Particles are likely to accumulate in sewage sludge

22 November 2018 / Cleaning products, Europe, Exposure modelling, Microplastics, Personal care, REACH, Risk assessment

Intentionally added microplastics are more likely to enter and accumulate in terrestrial and freshwater environments rather than the oceans, according to analysis by Echa.

The finding, announced 22 November on Echa's website, contrasts with the popular understanding of microplastics pollution as primarily a marine problem and could prove significant in the risk assessment that Echa is conducting under a mandate from the European Commission.

Some types of microplastic are used in – or "intentionally added" to – consumer and professional products, such as cosmetics, detergents, paints and pesticides, to perform a specific function. Facial and body scrubs often contain microplastics as beads to help exfoliate the skin, for example.

Other types are generated during normal use of articles containing plastic. For example, wearing and washing of garments made of synthetic textiles can result in disintegration of the fibres and addition of microplastics to the wastewater. Historically, concern has focused on these unintentionally added microplastics, which have been found in marine organisms, particularly fish.

REACH Restriction proposal

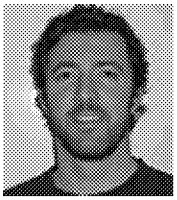
However, in January, the Commission asked Echa to prepare a REACH Restriction proposal on the use of intentionally added microplastic particles in consumer and professional products.

In June, several NGOs criticised Echa for "unduly limiting" the scope of the proposal by having taken into account industry concerns before putting the proposal before its scientific committees. The proposal will exclude "relevant and harmful uses of microplastics" before the risk assessment committee (Rac) and the socio-economic analysis committee (Seac) give their opinions, the NGOs said in a letter to Echa.

In its statement, Echa says that unintentionally added microplastics are often washed down the drain at the point of use, but they do not typically enter aquatic environments directly because of the way wastewater is treated in the EU. Instead, they most likely concentrate in sewage sludge that, in many member states, is later applied to agricultural land as fertiliser, the agency says. Furthermore, some are applied directly to agricultural land in pesticide products.

In general, the release of microplastics to the environment is problematic because they are "extremely persistent", with degradation taking thousands of years.

The agency expects to finalise its Restriction proposal by the start of 2019 and send the Rac and Seac opinions to the Commission in April 2020.



Andrew Turley

Science editor, Chemical Watch

Related Articles

- EU prepares comprehensive microplastics restriction
- NGOs attack Echa's 'limited' microplastics restriction proposal

Further Information:

- Echa statement

Echa round-up

22 November 2018 / Alternatives assessment & substitution, Classification, Europe, Labelling

Brexit update

Echa has released a video, 'How Brexit impacts your chemical company'.

The agency also updated its Brexit webpages.

New version of Chesar

Echa has released an updated version of Chesar, its chemical safety assessment and reporting tool.

Building on feedback received, version 3.4 provides:

- compatibility with Iuclid 6.3, released on 24 October;
- improved user friendliness; and
- enhanced support for importing updated use maps.

More information on the improvements and Iuclid version compatibility can be found on the Chesar website and in the version 3.4 release notes.

PACT updated

Echa has reminded the chemical community to check which substances are on the authorities' radar for future regulatory action through its revamped public activities coordination tool (PACT).

The agency has produced a small film clip to explain what the tool now provides.

Database on SVHCs in articles

Echa has published information on its forthcoming database on articles containing substances of very high concern (SVHCs).

The aim of the resource, stipulated under the revised waste framework Directive, is to support the circular economy by facilitating effective recycling and reuse of materials through greater knowledge of the hazardous substance content of articles.

It will also increase authorities' information on candidate list substances in articles.

The agency explains what the database is about, who will be using it, its scope and next steps.

Iuclid website

From 15 November, Echa service users must have an Echa account to log into the Iuclid website.

Users of the agency's Cloud services, REACH-IT, R4BP 3 or ePIC will already have such an account which can be used to access the tool.

The change will mean the same log in credentials can be used for all the agency's sites and tools.

An account can be created via the Iuclid website. And the relevant options will need to activated under 'My Account' for anyone wishing to continue receiving Iuclid news alerts, the agency advises.

The Iuclid website will be offline from 17:00 Wednesday 14 November to 12:00 on Thursday 15 November in order to make the changes.

Related Articles

- Echa updates Brexit webpages for UK and EU27 companies

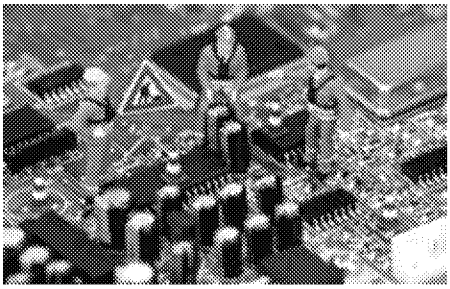
Further Information:

- Brexit video
- Chesar website
- PACT clip
- Database on SVHCs in articles

Call for electronics sector safety standard for environment, health

Manufacturers urged to lead the way

22 November 2018 / Electrical & electronics, Standards, United States



The electronics sector needs a product safety standard that focuses solely on environmental and human health impacts of products, including the adverse effects of chemicals.

Addressing delegates at Chemical Watch's first electronics conference in San Francisco this month, Michael Kirschner, founder and president of consultancy Design Chain Associates, said that such a standard was missing.

Industry standards exist for thermal, electrical, optical and even acoustic product safety, he said, but "we need another formal product safety discipline" that focuses on meeting environmental and human health requirements that address chemicals of concern.

Emerging regulation

He said that because these standards do not address this area of safety, regulations emerge.

Except for a few major manufacturers, the industry lacks adequate chemical and toxicological expertise, said Mr Kirschner.

"This is what puts us as industry, along with others such as the toy, automotive and textiles sectors, at the mercy of regulators," he added.

Customers and environmental NGOs "are defining the path forward for environmental and human health performance and safety in electronic products and we don't really have a good seat at the table".

Regulations, he said, are being introduced that may "look good on paper" but are not necessarily implementable or, for example, that truly consider alternative substances.

"We have to expand our knowledge in this space," he said, adding that a standard in this field would set the rules for product designers, which could then lead to a drive in suppliers moving towards green and sustainable substances and materials.

He called on the larger electronics manufacturers who have the resources and capability to define this and start encouraging standard bodies towards development.

We need those with resources to fund it and populate it to properly define the scope, requirements and desired outputs, he said.

Safety first

As an example of where environmental and health concerns have been lacking, Mr Kirschner turned to product flammability regulations in the US. These have often led to manufacturers adding substances such as chlorinated or brominated flame retardants to certain products and materials.

In the 1970's, some states, such as California, introduced regulations that required certain products to withstand flames for a specific amount of time. This saw the use of certain flame retardants rise in products, such as furniture and

electronics. Flame retardants are often used in the plastic casings and cable materials of electronics products and equipment.

Since then, studies have suggested that some of these substances cause adverse effects to the environment and human health. This has led to authorities taking action on their use, including the US Consumer Product Safety Commission and states such as Massachusetts, Washington and California.

However, requirements still exist. Clause six of the International Electrotechnical Commission's (IEC) 62368-1 standard requires most wiring and cable to comply with its flammability requirements.

"We implement clause six in order to ensure that our products meet flammability safety requirements. But the standard does not specify the materials to use or that you need to use flame retardants, it simply says you have to meet the requirement," he said.

"It certainly doesn't tell you whether and how to assess those materials for environmental and human health safety."

Mr Kirschner stressed that developing a standard is "a long-term process".

"It isn't something that can happen in a year. This, I believe, is five to ten years away."

Leigh Stringer

Global Business Editor

Related Articles

- US CPSC investigates possible action against organohalogen flame retardants
- Massachusetts advances flame retardant ban
- Washington state weighs policy options on flame retardants
- Flame retardant ban signed into California law

EU Commission: tools to address EDCs in cosmetics are 'adequate'

Priority list of potential endocrine disruptors due early next year

22 November 2018 / Cosmetic products Regulation, EDCs, Europe, Personal care

EU provisions to control endocrine disrupting chemicals in cosmetics are "adequate", a European Commission report has said.

The report, published on 7 November, is part of the delayed review of the cosmetics products Regulation concerning substances with endocrine disrupting properties. The EU executive was under an obligation to deliver this by January 2015.

It was published at the same time as the European Commission's outline of its long overdue EDCs strategy.

The review, the Commission said, has not revealed anything that "would justify deviating from the regime designed by the legislator to address the safety concerns related to the use of endocrine disruptors in cosmetics".

The cosmetics Regulation, it added, provides "the adequate tools" to regulate the use of cosmetic substances presenting a potential risk for human health. However, the regulation does not have any specific provisions for endocrine disruptors.

Priority list

The Commission said, early next year, it will establish a priority list of potential endocrine disruptors that are not already banned from use in cosmetic products, or specific prohibitions applicable to carcinogens, mutagens and reprotoxicants (CMR) substances.

In order to prepare the assessments it will launch calls for data addressed to member states, stakeholders and academia.

The Commission said it will then mandate the Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety (SCCS) to evaluate the substances with "the shortest delay" and take appropriate action to ban or restrict use of chemicals.

Tackling EDCs

A combination of EU tools is available to tackle EDCs in cosmetics, the Commission said. According to the cosmetics Regulation, the use of a potential EDC requires a scientific opinion by the SCCS.

When the SCCS safety assessment concludes there is a risk to human health of substances considered as EDCs, the Commission can take the "appropriate" measures to ban or restrict their use in cosmetics "on a case-by-case basis".

The SCCS has already evaluated cosmetic ingredients suspected of having the properties, such as several parabens, the Commission added.

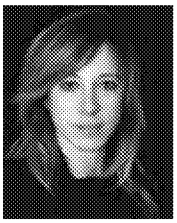
In terms of other legislation, chemicals with such properties in cosmetics are banned when:

- they are classified as CMRs under the CLP Regulation – unless a specific derogation is fully justified and scientifically approved by the SCCS; and

- they have adverse effects on the environment, and can therefore be banned under REACH.

The criteria to identify endocrine disruptors in biocides and plant protection products do not have direct legal consequences for other areas of EU law, including the cosmetics Regulation, the Commission said.

NGOs and member states have long called for an EU harmonised approach across different regulations for the chemicals.



Caterina Tani

EMEA reporter

Related Articles

- EU outlines new strategy on EDCs
- MSC agrees BPA is an endocrine disruptor
- EU criteria for identifying EDCs under BPR take effect
- EU adopts EDC criteria for plant protection products
- Commission urged to close EU regulatory gaps on EDCs

Further Information:

- Commission report

Canada launches survey into quaternary ammonium compounds

22 November 2018 / Biocides, Canada, Environmental Protection Act, Exposure modelling, Exposure scenarios

The Canadian government has launched a survey of quaternary ammonium compounds (quats or QACs), which are used as biocidal agents in various applications. It applies to around 800 chemicals.

The aim is to collect basic information from manufacturers and importers on quantities, concentrations and uses, to determine their commercial status and establish a national inventory.

For some manufacturers and importers, participation in the survey is mandatory under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act (Cepa). Others may provide information voluntarily.

The deadline for participation is 24 April 2019.

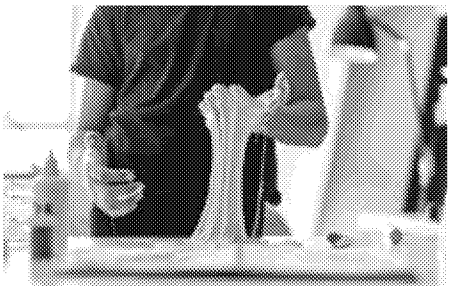
Further Information:

- Announcement

US NGO raises concerns over lead and boron in toys

Blood levels of about 500,000 toddlers above five micrograms per deciliter

22 November 2018 / Children's products, Metals, Product testing, Retail, United States



Toys containing lead and boron are making their way onto US store shelves, according to the US Public Interest Research Group.

In the 33rd edition of its *Trouble in Toyland* report, the group says that this is because of lax monitoring or problems with manufacturing in the US or abroad.

In August, more than 30,000 units of rubber critter toys were recalled in the US due to lead paint contamination. US PIRG says the CPSC described this recall as occurring "due to violation of [the] federal lead paint ban" in their recall advisory.

"This new incident of mass lead contamination in toys in 2018 highlights how lead contaminated children's products are still reaching store shelves and getting into the hands of children," the report says.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) – an organisation that sits under the US Department of Health and Human Services – there are approximately half a million US children, ages one to five, with blood lead levels above five micrograms per deciliter (µg/dL). This is the reference level at which the CDC recommends public health actions is initiated.

It states on its website that no safe blood lead level in children has been identified and exposure can affect nearly every system in the body.

Federal law requires that all children's products manufactured after August 2011 contain no more than 100 parts per million (ppm) of total lead content in all accessible parts.

US PIRG is calling on the government to revisit lead standards for children's toys to determine if a limit as high as 100ppm is appropriate.

'Emerging threat'

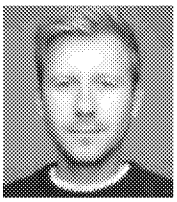
The organisation says that boron substances found in toys is an "emerging toxic threat". It tested a number of slime toys bought from retailers Amazon and Walmart. One contained boron concentrations as high as 4,700ppm, much higher than the EU toy safety Directive's 300mg/kg limit value for liquid or stick toy material. For the other tested products, concentrations ranged from 1,100ppm to 4,600ppm.

In May, the French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health and Safety warned that the majority of online do-it-yourself toy 'slime' recipes contain boron compounds, which it says are reprotoxic, may impact foetal development and "must not be manipulated by children repeatedly".

And in July, UK consumer group Which? also found that children's 'slime' products, sold as toys in online stores, can contain levels of boron compounds exceeding EU safety limits.

Following its findings, US PIRG says it has asked the CPSC to "explore the need to set limits on concentrations of boron compounds in children's products such as slime".

"To keep kids safe, it may be necessary to limit boron content in children's toys or, at least, explicitly label toys that are high in boron content," it says.



Leigh Stringer

Global Business Editor

Related Articles

- Anses warns against hazardous substances in homemade toy 'slime'
- UK consumer body flags excessive boron levels in 'slime' toys

Further Information:

- Trouble in Toyland report

Envi challenges sodium dichromate authorisation draft decision

Draft motion may influence possible December REACH committee vote

22 November 2018 / Alternatives assessment & substitution, Europe, REACH, SVHCs, Textiles & apparel

In a rare step to influence the REACH process, the European Parliament's environment committee (Envi) has challenged a Commission draft implementing Regulation authorising a use of the SVHC sodium dichromate.

On 20 November the committee adopted a draft motion for a resolution seeking to block a Commission proposal to grant Italian firm Ilario Ormezzano Sai permission to use the substance – a known carcinogen – in wool dyeing.

The committee's move is not binding, but it could impact the decision of the REACH committee if its resolution is endorsed at a Parliamentary plenary in Brussels on 28 November. The REACH committee could vote on the authorisation at its 11-12 December meeting.

Envi's motion says the Commission has "exceeded the implementing powers" provided in REACH by "not respecting the conditions" set for granting an authorisation.

It calls on the EU executive to withdraw its draft implementing decision and submit a new one rejecting the application.

Envi's case is based on the Echa Risk Assessment Committee (Rac) Opinion that "a theoretical safe-level of exposure to this substance cannot be set". Rac has also concluded that the applicant's risk management measures "were not appropriate and effective".

The motion also questions the conclusion of Echa's Socio-economic Analysis Committee (Seac) that no suitable alternative to the substance is available, despite the "many deficiencies" it identified in the application in this respect.

The Italian company had argued that its customers would not accept any of the alternatives on the market, but Envi says customer preferences are subjective and may not have been made "in full knowledge of the risks".

Such an outcome, the motion says, "cannot be reconciled" with the fact that alternatives have been available "for many years".

NGOs have said that discussions of a similar application for authorisation submitted by Gruppa Colle have shown that safer alternatives are available on the market.

Unprecedented action?

A rejection by the REACH committee would be unprecedented as it has so far rubber stamped all applications for uses of SVHCs on the authorisation list.

MEPs have only once before tried to block an authorisation proposal, for the use of DEHP in recycled PVC in 2015. That attempt was unsuccessful, however, as the Commission proceeded with its decision to grant authorisation. The Commission has endorsed the REACH committee decisions in all 172 cases so far.

Tatiana Santos, policy manager at NGO the European Environmental Bureau (EEB), said the new objection by Envi is a "clear sign" the system is not working properly "if all applications for authorisation are getting blanket approval" even when safer alternatives exist.

This, she said, is encouraging the use of the most hazardous chemicals "by obsolete companies instead of favouring safer products by frontrunners and encouraging substitution" – a key goal of authorisation.

If the authorisation decision on sodium dichromate is approved, then the EU Parliament could take the Commission to court, Ms Santos added.

Meanwhile, several industry associations have sent a letter to EU authorities, calling for incentives to motivate companies to actively look for alternatives to SVHCs.

Clelia Oziel

EMEA correspondent

Related Articles

- Member states urged to reject chromate authorisation applications
- Italian textiles company supports NGO authorisation recommendations
- MEPs call for ban on recycled plastics containing DEHP
- NGOs say REACH authorisation 'rewards laggards'
- Greater EU SVHC substitution incentives needed – industry

Further Information:

- Draft motion

UK/Echa 'cooperation' included in draft Brexit political declaration

Cefic, CIA say declaration keeps alive 'successful resolution' to industry concerns

22 November 2018 / Europe, REACH, United Kingdom

A commitment for Britain and the EU to explore the possibility of "cooperation" between UK authorities and Echa has been included in the draft Brexit political declaration.

Agreed in principle on 22 November, the declaration sets out the framework for a future relationship between the two sides and will guide negotiations following the UK's departure.

In a joint statement, Cefic and the UK's Chemical Industries Association (CIA) welcomed the news and said the political declaration "continues to keep alive a successful resolution" to industry concerns.

"Given this commitment, chemical businesses in the EU27 and the UK will be working with negotiators to ensure the UK's continued participation in the European chemicals agency."

NGO CHEM Trust also welcomed the draft declaration. There are "clear benefits" to both the EU and the UK of the UK remaining within the REACH system, including protection of human health and the environment, preventing damaging deregulation and facilitating trade, it said.

"However, there is more work to be done to develop the vague language into solid commitments, and to agree which chemical-related laws the UK will need to remain aligned."

The final Withdrawal Agreement and Political Declaration could be agreed by EU27 and UK governments on 25 November.

Luke Buxton

EMEA desk editor

Related Articles

- Brexit: UK, EU chemicals industry welcomes agreed draft deal
- Brexit: UK, EU chemicals industry welcomes agreed draft deal
- Industry backs parliament subcommittee call for Brexit REACH clarity

Further Information:

- Draft political declaration

OTHER ARTICLES

Trouble in Toyland: Holiday hazards for kids

Rutland Herald

MONTPELIER — This year's edition of the annual Trouble in Toyland report warns about hazardous toys that are contaminated by **toxic chemicals**, ...

Annual toy safety test finds reason to stay alert and scrutinize before you buy

KOMO News

Highlights in this year's Trouble In Toyland survey: not enough safety labeling, **toxic chemicals**, privacy concerns and noise. "This year we found a toy ...

Group Warns Of Toys That Are Alleged Cybersecurity Risks, Contaminated With Chemicals Ahead ...

CBS Philly

This year's investigation found hazardous toys that researchers say are contaminated with **toxic chemicals**, or they may pose choking hazards to kids.

The truth about talc, parabens and 8 other controversial makeup ingredients

USA TODAY

"There's kind of been a hysteria **and** fear-mongering around '**toxic**' ingredients," said Kopf, who also covered the industry for Consumer Reports.

WATCH: Toys have toxic chemicals, spying capabilities: WISPIRG survey

KITV Honolulu

The 33rd annual Trouble in Toyland study alerts the public to potential hazards in this year's most popular toys. original story: ...

Dangerous chemicals could be lurking in your furniture

WWBT NBC12 News

Symptoms like this, from a bedroom set, a mattress **and** a desk? Complaints are piling up on saferproducts.gov. The culprit? Furniture releasing **toxic** ...

New documents call PFAS safety numbers into question

Bucks County Courier Times

But perhaps of most consequence is analysis by the U.S. Agency for **Toxic Substances** and Disease Registry, a sub-agency of the U.S. Centers for ...

Michigan plans unique testing to assess PFAS impact

The Detroit News

The **toxic** class of **chemicals**, once widely used in Teflon, Scotchgard, military bases **and** firefighting foam, is linked to some health effects, including ...